1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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The Miskito readily intermarry with foreigners. They assimilate all races; the children always speak the language of the mother and grow up as Miskito, whether the father be "Creole," "Ladino," Carib, Negro, Sumu, Rama, Paya, North American, European, Syrian, or Chinaman. The villages between Wounta and Rio Hueso show this phenomenon to perfection. (Heath, a: 50.) Consequently the pure Indian tribes, as the Sumu, Paya, and Rama, are rapidly diminishing in numbers, whereas the Miskito, owing to the influx of fresh blood, are holding their own.

In spite of the fact that the Miskito have been since the seventeenth century in contact with buccaneers, British traders, and settlers, mahogany cutters, rubber bleeders, and Moravian missionaries, they have not changed considerably in their mode of life. Their tribal name appears first in the works of the piratical sea rovers, the English calling them generally "Moskite" and "Moskito," and the French "Moustique" and "Moustiquais."

Exquemelin (Engl. ed.: 250; French ed.: II, 264–265) calculates the number of the Miskito at about 1,500 to 1,700, including 200 Negro slaves. In those days they were divided into two subtribes having but little relation with each other. One of them lived at Cabo Gracias a Dios, the other at Moustique (=Sandy Bay?). The Indians from this latter place occasionally accompanied the buccaneer vessels, the others being less courageous on the sea. Dampier states, however, that the whole tribes comprised less than 100 men (Dampier: I, 7). Raveneau de Lussan (437–438), who writes about the same time, says that the Miskito of Cabo Gracias a Dios and lower Rio Coco were largely mixed with Negroes, while those at Sandy Bay were still pure Indians. In 1699 the Miskito occupied the seacoast from Cabo Camarón in Honduras to about 57 miles south of Brangmans River (=Wawa River?), where the territory of the Sumu began. The coast line of their territory had an extension of about 285 miles; they had, besides, two settlements on the lower Rio Coco (M. W.: 299). From the details given by the latter author the total population of this tribe numbered close to 1,000. In 1725 the Miskito numbered about 2,000 men altogether and were ruled by three chiefs (Lade). Bell (a: 250), who lived many years in the country, estimated the total Indian population of that territory at about 10,000 to 15,000, of which the Miskito numbered nearly one-half. The present writer calculates the total number of this tribe at about 15,000, of which at least one-third live on both banks of Rio Coco as far up as Rio Bocay, that is, 275 to 300 miles from the sea. In the Republic of Honduras, from Rio Coco to Rio Tinto, may be found from 3,000 to 4,000 Miskito, who inhabit the seashore and lagoons as well as the lower Rio Patuca. The remainder of this tribe lives in Nicaragua, from Rio Coco to Pearl Lagoon.

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restricted to two subtribes thereof. Lehmann's classification of the Sumu tribes is likewise unsatisfactory. With the word "Sumu" we have a convenient name for the whole of these various dialects; its use will avoid the sad confusion met with still in the recent literature.

All the male Sumu either know Miskito or Spanish (or even both), depending upon their proximity to Miskito or Ladino settlements. A few of them know a little English. Hardly any of the women are, however, able to speak a foreign tongue. Through Miskito many corrupted English words have passed into their speech, while words borrowed from Spanish are not so common.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE MISKITO AND SUMU

The relationship of the Miskito with the Sumu has already been established from linguistic evidence (Lehmann, b: 714–720) and is reenforced by a survey of the ethnology of the two tribes. In this connection the following Sumu tradition, which points toward a common origin, will be interesting. It was recorded in 1904 at *Alami-kañban* (Rio Prinsapolca) from a Sumu named Frederick, by the Rev. G. R. Heath, a Moravian missionary, who resided many years on the Mosquito Coast. The latter communicated it to Lehmann, who published it in 1910 (b: 717–718). This version was later reproduced by Joyce (9–10) and by Alexander (185–186):

> At Kaunapa Hill, on the left bank of Rio Patuca, a few miles below the mouth of Rio Guampú, there is a rock bearing the sign of a human umbilical cord, and from which were born the tribal ancestors, a Great Father (*Mĕi-sahana* "he who begot us")[3] and a Great Mother (*Itwana* or *Itoki*).[4] The Miskito and the Sumu are the descendants of these two primal ancestors.
>
> The first born were the Miskito who, disobedient and headstrong, as they are still to-day, cared little for the instructions of their ancestors and ran away to the seacoast.
>
> Then the Twahka or Tawahka were born, who consider themselves to this day the nobility among the Sumu.[5]
>
> Then followed the Yusku, who turned to evil ways; for that reason the other tribes made war upon them and almost exterminated them.
>
> The youngest, the Ulwa, being according to the Indian custom the favorites, profited to such an extent by the instructions of the tribal ancestors that they became especially skilled in the secrets of medicine and incantation and won the name of *Boa*, "enchanters."[6]

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[3] *Wan-bĕikan* in the Miskito language.

[4] *Yapti-misri*, "Mother Scorpion," or *Yapti-tara*, "Great Mother," in the language of the Miskito.

[5] In Miskito the word *tawakya* means, however, "firstborn" and the parents thus call their first child.

[6] Lehmann (b: 717) says erroneously "Singers," and this error is copied by Joyce (10) and Alexander (185–186). According to my own informants the Boa were a subtribe of the Sumu differing from the Ulwa.